

Hearing on SB 501
before the Senate Taxation Committee
Testimony of **Mark R. Taylor** on behalf of
Anheuser-Busch Companies
March 11, 2009

1. To date, Anheuser-Busch has invested more than \$750 Million dollars in alcohol awareness programs.
2. Anheuser-Busch's Consumer Awareness and Education initiative currently includes more than 20 programs (represented by the brochure). Within the past couple of years, programs like Street Smart and Make the Right Call have been implemented at Anheuser-Busch's expense at high schools in Montana, including some on reservations. Additionally, Anheuser-Busch believes in private partnerships and has done so locally with Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies here in Montana to address some of their initiatives, and we will likely continue partnering with organizations interested in awareness and education issues.
3. As every brewer knows, quality beers can only be made with quality ingredients. The tax increase contemplated in SB 501 is inconsistent with economic investment Montana has made in its malt barley industry. Anheuser-Busch alone has three malt barley facilities in Montana – Sidney, Fairfield, & Conrad, and has included expansions in recent years.
4. Anheuser-Busch has historically purchased more than \$50 Million annually in malt barley from approximately 1,100 Montana growers – a straight infusion of dollars into rural Montana economies.
5. The bottom line is that alcohol tax increases have a direct and negative impact on all aspects of the beer industry, from Montana's growers to the independent beer distributors - to the more than 3,000 retail accounts – and perhaps most importantly, to the customers they serve.

CLOSING: I encourage all Committee members to visit www.beerresponsible.com to further view examples of the extraordinary investment A-B is making to educate its customers.